

THREE COUNT

Professional Wrestling Newsletter
by Alex Marvez

Volume 1, Number 5

October 11, 1991

DANGEROUSLY SUSPENDED BY WCW: USWA, WCW DEAL FALLS THROUGH

Paul E. Dangerously was suspended last Monday by World Championship Wrestling for the remaining six months of his contract for reportedly leaking information about a future WCW storyline.

WCW publicist **Barry Norman** said Dangerously, wrestling's top color commentator, was suspended because of a "philosophical difference with WCW." But sources close to the situation say the measure was taken because Dangerously revealed to another wrestler that WCW and the Memphis-based United States Wrestling Association were going to co-promote some upcoming shows.

WCW was scheduled to conduct a television taping Nov. 12 in Memphis, with wrestlers from the USWA also appearing. The reason for the venture appeared to center around WCW's attempt to reintroduce the National Wrestling Alliance title. On WCW's New York telecasts, WCW champion **Lex Luger** has challenged any world champion to meet him in a title vs. title match (of course, neither **Ric Flair** or **Hulk Hogan** will consent to that, because the World Wrestling Federation has nothing to gain by being associated with WCW). WCW was going to take those claims one step further. Instead of giving the status of NWA champion to Luger (which **Jim Ross** announced on his weekly radio show had happened), WCW was going to try to give the title credibility by "inviting" all the world champions from other organizations to participate. The only wrestlers to accept the offer would be Luger and **Jerry "The King" Lawler**, the USWA champion. Luger and Lawler would then wrestle in Memphis (I don't believe the match was originally scheduled for Nov. 12), with Lawler actually winning. Then, on a WCW pay-per-view show, Lawler would drop the title to Luger.

But USWA owner **Jerry Jarrett** pulled out of the deal, claiming Dangerously had told Global Wrestling Federation performer **Eddie Gilbert** of the plan. Jarrett, who comes from the old school of wrestling that teaches never to reveal the outcome of matches and of limiting what wrestling fans know, said the scheduled scenarios would be leaked to those in the wrestling business weeks ahead of time. Dangerously was then suspended. Norman would not confirm or deny the story.

One wrestling expert has speculated Lawler was opposed to the deal and Jarrett was looking for a scapegoat. Lawler's opposition stemmed from ideas of running a joint show with WCW, which would draw a large crowd but hurt regular USWA shows in the long run if fans began skipping USWA cards waiting for the joint shows loaded with talent from both groups.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 5)

LETTERS

Dear Alex:

I have a couple of questions for you:

1. Are **The Rockers**, **Haku** and **The Barbarian** leaving the WWF?

2. Why doesn't the WWF have steel cage matches at live shows or across the country?

3. I heard that **Rick "The Model" Martel** wanted to wrestle in Japan, but the WWF wouldn't let him. Is that true?

4. What is **Gorilla Monsoon's** real name?

5. Are there any matches taped from live shows, but not shown on WWF television shows? If so, how do I obtain them?

6. What is the address of **Dave Meltzer's** Wrestling Observer? Is his the same newsletter as yours?

-- **Sean Samuels, Lighthouse Point, FL**

AM: In order:

1. As explained last issue, **The Rockers** gave notice to the WWF, but are expected to remain with the group. The procedure was merely a precaution against a binding contract should **The Rockers** want to leave the WWF in December (But barring WCW, they really have no place else to wrestle). **Haku** is wrestling exclusively in Japan as a main-eventer. Because **Haku** is legitimately the WWF's toughest performer outside the ring, he is being pushed as a major star to Japanese fans who respect his reputation. **The Barbarian** is still around, but really doesn't have anyone to feud with.

2. The WWF saves its steel cage matches for when a feud warrants it (i.e. an initial match ends in a count out, so a rematch is scheduled to prevent the same thing from happening). The WWF has been very good about limiting the amount of these matches, because they lose their "special" status if they are used too often (like WCW and the USWA have). Steel cage matches are also used as a lure to draw fans to the arena, under the pretense that the match will have a definite conclusion because of the gimmick. The WWF has presented cage matches on some of its old Main Event telecasts.

3. **Martel** has not wrestled in the WWF since **Wrestlemania VII** last April because of health problems. He has, though, wrestled on a Japanese tour for **Super World Sports** (the WWF's partner in its Far East ventures). Don't expect him to return to the WWF soon.

THREE COUNT/Page 2

4. **Monsoon's** real name is **Gino Morrelli**. His son, also named **Gino**, is one of the WWF's premiere referees.

5. WWF matches from **Madison Square Garden** are telecast on the MSG network in New York soon after the card is held. Most of those matches do not appear on WWF telecasts. Also, the WWF tapes matches and releases them on commercial video tapes, like **Wrestle Fest**. The WWF used to have more networks like MSG, but did not allow shows from **The Spectrum** in Philadelphia and the **Los Angeles Sports Arena** to be broadcast anymore when their live attendance began to wane.

6. The Observer's address is P.O. Box 1228, Campbell, Calif. 95009-1228. Price is \$6 for 4 issues. Dave's newsletter has been around for 10 years, and is light years ahead of mine in many aspects, including news from foreign countries and news from smaller independent promotions. I cannot recommend it highly enough.

Dear Alex:

I would like your personal comments concerning WCW's firing of **Ric Flair**. Also, how do the wrestlers of WCW feel about losing **Flair**, i.e. **Sting**, **Lex Luger**, **Barry Windham**, etc.

-- **John O'Brien, East Cleveland, OH**

AM: When **Flair** was fired, I really felt WCW made its final break with the past and bared no more resemblance to the promotion I enjoyed throughout the late 1980s (despite all its problems). I thought it was stupid to release the best actual wrestler, most popular performer and only WCW wrestler recognized by the mainstream public. I also understand, though, that political problems had spelled the end of the days of **Flair** on top of the promotion. Through the years, and especially through the match-making of **Dusty Rhodes**, **Flair** had been characterized as a wrestler who could only hold his title through some form of chicanery, not by skill. Feud after feud with "screw-job" finishes to **Flair** matches diluted the **Nature Boy's** appeal. While I feel **Flair** still had a lot of value for the company, the switch to the WWF has revitalized his career. And for that I'm thankful.

As for WCW wrestlers, I only know that almost every wrestler respects **Flair** for his

(Continued on Page 3)

LETTERS

(Continued from Page 2)

incredible work ethic. I'm sure they were not happy by Flair's departure, but there was nothing they could do about it.

Dear Alex:

I was wondering if there is going to be a new "president" of the WWF. Lately, it appears Jack Tunney has been making some stupid decisions that might be a set-up for a new WWF president. For instance, about a year ago, Rick Rude and Bobby Heenan, his former manager, made some comments regarding the Big Boss Man's mother. Tunney wasted no time in suspending Rude. When The Ultimate Warrior was shoved into a coffin by The Undertaker on The Funeral Parlor, Tunney claimed Paul Bearer and The Taker "didn't mean to hurt him." I understand this is all an act, but why is the WWF making such meaningless decisions? If, however, a new president is on the way, will it be Gorilla Monsoon?

I really don't understand this whole Sergeant Slaughter business. For over a year, Sarge has insulted our country and everything America stands for. The WWF even went out of its way to develop a hatred of his character. He burned a Hulk Hogan poster and T-shirt, threw a fireball in his face, etc. Now Slaughter appears on television and "apologizes" to the country for what he has done? Unfortunately, I think fans will accept him as their new hero. It's amazing how much time can be spent on something, and how overnight it can be destroyed.

It really is incredible about how honest everyone is about pro wrestling now. A few days ago, Hogan appeared on "Live With Regis and Kathy Lee," and the Hulkster described the sport as "a controlled situation" and as "strictly entertainment." He also gave away a few things too soon. When speaking of Randy Savage, Hogan didn't say the Macho Man lost a career match to The Warrior at WM VII, but said Savage left the ring for a while to be at home with The Lovely Elizabeth. He then said Savage was returning to the ring to gain revenge on Roberts and The Underwrestler (a little joke from The Hulkster) and how he would love to get Savage in the ring one more time.

-- Robbie Bloom, Longwood, FL

AM: From all indications, Tunney is

THREE COUNT/Page 3

staying. And there is a reason for his incompetence. When Tunney makes irrational decisions about rational subjects on a regular basis, it makes it easier for the WWF to explain quirks in its storylines that aren't supposed to happen.

For example, Rude was never suspended from the WWF in real-life, having quit just before a scheduled series with the Boss Man. So the WWF had to go with an alternate plan, and using Tunney was convenient and intelligent. By "suspending" Rude, it explains his absence from the WWF long enough for fans to forget he even existed. It also gave Heenan an excellent excuse to substitute for Rude on the road.

Slaughter is being turned babyface, because he was fairly unsuccessful as a villain. The character was not only offensive, but very stale once the war ended.

Yes, the exposure of pro wrestling is becoming more common every time a wrestler opens his mouth. Hogan's comments about Savage are funny, because the Macho Man has no interest in wrestling except for a pay-per-view event. As I will write within the next two issues, Hogan has been talking a lot lately, and very little of it is the truth.

Three Count is a professional wrestling newsletter published four times a month. Price for subscription is \$6 for one month, \$18 for three months, \$33 for six months and \$66 for one year. Please address all subscription checks to Three Count and send them to P.O. Box 12795, Gainesville, Fla., 32604-0795. Please include name, age, address and phone number.

ADVERTISEMENTS

Sean Samuels of 2201 NE 36 ST #206, Lighthouse Point, FL 33... is looking for videotape of WWF matches from Madison Square Garden or any other WWF matches taped live and not shown on syndicated telecasts.

Desire any wrestling memorabilia? Interested in video tape of old matches or from other parts of the country? Send your request to Three Count at P.O. Box 12795, Gainesville, Fla., 32604-0795.

World Championship Wrestling

Some undesired fan response and a major screw-up at a WCW television taping last Monday at Center Stage in Atlanta led to the retaping of three matches.

The first gaff came during a **P.N. News-Big Josh** preliminary tag-team match, when a chant of "We Want Flair" echoed throughout the arena. And I thought cheers for the current WWF superstar had finally faded. Then, during a squash match featuring **Bill Kazmeier**, a smaller group of fans began chanting "Steroids" until WCW director of security **Doug Dillinger** went into the crowd and threatened to eject those who continued. I understand both of those bouts will be retaped.

Kazmeier himself caused the third gaff. The "walking mummy" (as **Arn Anderson** called him) was supposed to do a run-in at the conclusion of a match between **Abdullah the Butcher-Cactus Jack** vs. **Sting-Bobby Eaton**. Well, Kazmeier came out before his cue (Abby pinning Eaton with an elbow smash), and the referee had to send the oaf back to the dressing room. Abby then pinned Eaton quickly, and Kazmeier ran back out. Heard it looked as bad as it sounds.

Even worse news for WCW fans is the non-uniformity of main events at live shows during November. The cards are headlined by such matches as **Lex Luger** vs. **Kazmeier**, **Luger** vs. **Brian Pillman** and **Luger** vs. **Tom Zenk** (which have little-to-no build-up). I know, there's no mention of **Ron Simmons**, even though every WCW television show has tried to establish him as a legitimate main-eventer for the past month.

Some good news -- **Medusa Macelli** made her WCW debut at last Monday's television taping. There's no program awaiting her, but she could be one of the biggest stars in wrestling given the opportunity. Medusa has been wrestling in Japan for a couple of years, and her wrestling has improved 10-fold from her AWA days. WCW signed Medusa

THREE COUNT/Page 4

because Global Wrestling Federation owner **Joe Pedicino** wanted to make her **The Boss** that has been hyped on GWF telecasts since the group's inception.

WCW's Florida swing last week went fairly well. Their 10/3 show in Lakeland drew 2,055 fans for what I was told was WCW's best live show in almost a year. The highlight was a tag-team bout between **Abby** and **Cactus** vs. **Sting** and **Rick Steiner**, where Jack ended up in a garbage can. Jacksonville drew a \$31,000 house (great for WCW), but the 10/6 show in Tallahassee drew a disappointing 1,800 fans with **Simmons**, a former Florida State star, headlining against **Luger**.

Scott Steiner is still questionable to wrestle at Halloween Havoc, but will definitely make an appearance. He's scheduled to start accompanying Rick at live shows during the first week of November, and return to a regular schedule Nov. 21.

World Wrestling Federation

Tidbits: Not too much news from the group's last television taping a couple of weeks ago...**Tito Santana** returned as **El Matador**, and does a bullfighting impression in the ring...Expect **The Orient Express** to turn good and feud with **The Beverly Brothers**. The latter duo turned on **Pat Tanaka** in a six-man tag-team match. By the time the match airs, **Kato (Paul Diamond)** will have returned from a reported suspension stemming from a drug test...A tag-team called **Double Trouble** received a try out in a match not taped for television. Both members of **Trouble** are about 5-6, 400 pounds and used to wrestle as **The Undertakers**...Advances for the **Flair-Hulk Hogan** matches have been outstanding, but no bouts are scheduled in Florida yet...I understand the WWF show in Tampa opposite the WCW show in Lakeland drew 2,200 paying fans with 1,000-2,000 complimentary tickets. WWF in Orlando last Monday reportedly drew 3,500 fans with **Sid Justice** vs. **Jake Roberts** headlining.

Dangerously

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Dangerously (real name Paul Heyman) issued a statement through **Bruce Gold**, his New York-based attorney:

"WCW has announced that Mr. Dangerously has been suspended. The reason given for the action is a philosophical difference. Mr. Dangerously asserts uncategorically that there are neither philosophical nor policy differences between himself and the management, employees or agents of WCW, and that there are no valid grounds upon which WCW can base its unwarranted, unilateral decision to breach it's contractual relationship with Mr. Dangerously. He is distressed that, for the second time, WCW is attempting to prevent him from doing the job for which he was employed and is presently conferring with counsel to determine the appropriate legal response. He is prepared to explore all remedies available in response to this illegal suspension and the resulting damage to his professional reputation and the goodwill associated therewith.

Dangerously, 26, was fired from WCW in September 1989 after a backstage argument with Flair, who was WCW's match-maker at the time. Dangerously was rehired as an announcer seven months later, and was color commentator on four WCW shows (Power Hour and World Championship Wrestling on TBS, WCW's syndicated show in New York and WCW telecasts in Canada). He will receive the remaining salary from his six-figure contract. Currently, Ross is doing the play-by-play for those shows without a sidekick.

Dangerously reached prominence as a manager in late 1986 in Memphis as manager of **Tommy Rich** and **Austin Idol** in their feud against Lawler (the last hot feud in Memphis thus far). After leaving the promotion in May 1987, Dangerously had stints as a manager in the American Wrestling Alliance and the defunct Continental Wrestling Federation. He entered WCW in December of 1988 managing two of his chagrins from the AWA -- "**Loverboy**" **Dennis Condrey** and **Randy Rose**. The duo, known as The Original Midnight Express, began feuding with **Jim Cornette's** Midnight Express of **Stan Lane** and **Bobby Eaton** in what most wrestling experts regard as one of WCW's best feuds. Dangerously also had a stint as manager of **Mean Mark Callous** (now known as **The Undertaker** in the WWF) before focusing exclusively on announcing.

In my opinion, I think this is your typical stupid move by WCW, whether Dangerously told Gilbert of the scenario or not. Dangerously busted his hump for the company, and has one of the sport's most innovative minds (even though he never got to use it under the **Dusty Rhodes** match-making regime). If a secret or upcoming storyline is released amongst wrestlers or in a newsletter, the number of fans who hear about it is negligible. Who cares if 1/100 of wrestling fans know what's going to happen? Everybody knows Hogan is going to win his main-event match at Wrestlemania, but nobody declines to order the pay-per-view show because of an expected outcome. Those fans who have access to "inside" information are usually the most loyal, while the borderline fan needs to be swayed to attend matches. Instead of worrying about Dangerously, WCW should spend its time trying to garner mainstream media attention and honing its product. And the USWA should be thankful WCW wanted to work with them. If live attendance rises from 500 to 2,000 for a joint show and then back down to 500 the next week, the USWA should be overjoyed.

NOTEBOOK

PRINTING SCHEDULE UPDATE: My big story I have been hyping for the past few weeks is a detailed look at the state of Florida's attempt to regulate professional wrestling -- a move that may have a major impact on the sport. However, as of press time, I was unable to finish researching the story. I am hoping to have a special issue out by the middle of next week that will not interfere with the printing of next week's issue that will focus on the story, look at its background and the positives and negatives of the legislation. I have a story on this subject scheduled to appear in next week's *Miami Herald*, but I'm not sure of the date (I guess it's when I finish).

An update on some smaller promotions based in South Florida. Former WWF wrestler **Joe Mirto** and **Ted "The Bulldog" Vernon** are promoting a show for the Linda Ray Center for abused and abandoned children at 12:30 p.m. Oct. 19 at the Radisson Mart Hotel in Miami. Tickets are \$5 for adults and children under 12 are free with a paying adult. Matches on the show are **Rock of Gibraltar vs. Steve Collins**, **Rotten Ron vs. "The Jamaican Jammer" Bobby Wales**, **Ricky Santana vs. Colonel Kirschner** and **Jimmy "The Union Man" Ivey vs. The Miami Mauler (Mirto)**. As of Oct. 2, the show had raised \$7,000 for the center.

Ladies Major League Wrestling has a one-hour television special airing on Channel America and independent stations at 11:30 p.m. next Friday. I've seen the show, and it's pretty good for an initial taping. **Bruno Sammartino** and former WWWF announcer **Bob Caudle** do the commentating, with **Luna Vachon**, **Penelope Paradise** and **Taylor-Made Medina** the group's top stars. The show will reach *Three Count* readers in the following areas:

Florida: Tampa -- WBA (Channel 57), WAJ (Ch. 35); Orlando -- Cable Channel 21; Daytona Beach -- WAM (Ch. 42); West Palm Beach, Jupiter -- WBU (Ch. 9); Pensacola -- WPAN (Ch. 53); Naples -- WDS (Ch. 9); Fort Myers -- WBR (Ch. 7); Tallahassee -- WBI (Ch. 9); Perry -- WAX (Ch. 69).

Pennsylvania: Hammonton -- WCC (Ch. 8); Pittsburgh -- WAU (Ch. 63); Dillsburg -- WAF (Ch. 40). **Massachusetts:** Boston -- Ch. 62. **Ohio:** Akron -- WAI (Ch. 29); Ashland -- WBP (Ch. 59). **New York:** Buffalo -- WAV (Ch. 58).

NEXT ISSUE: The next regular issue will feature the return of the Spotlight section, and it's a good one -- a no-holds-barred interview with **Superstar Billy Graham**. I'm anticipating the headline story as the plans for Starrcade '91 (which I can't reveal in detail yet). Plus, more letters, results (hopefully) and all the top news in wrestling! See ya' in seven days.

Three Count Newsletter
P.O. Box 12795
Gainesville, FL 32604-0795